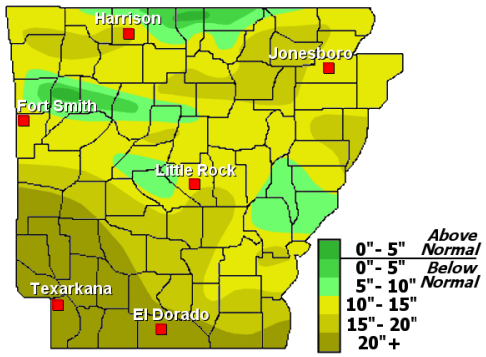
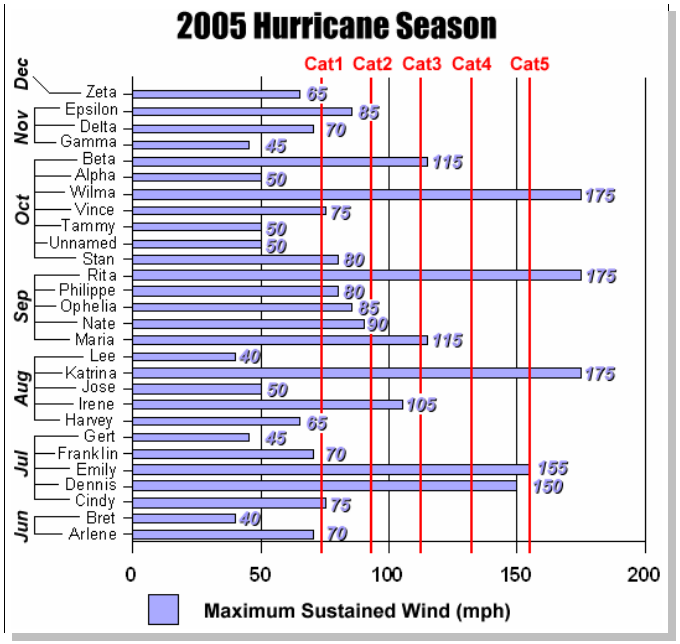
Rita also produced 3 to 6 inches of rain in much of the state (except the northwest). This temporarily ended a drought which had lingered since the early Spring.



However, there were no rainfall events quite like Rita the remainder of 2005...and the drought re-emerged. By the end of the year, parts of southwest Arkansas had rainfall deficits exceeding 20 inches.

In the picture: Precipitation departures from normal in 2005.

Rita was one of a record 28 storms in the Atlantic basin in 2005 (the previous record was 21 storms in 1933). Katrina was perhaps the most devastating storm, making landfall about a month prior to Rita (on August 29th). Katrina left thousands of people homeless along the southeast Louisiana and Mississippi Gulf Coasts...and flooded the city of New Orleans.



In the picture: There were 28 named storms during the 2005 hurricane season. Of these storms, 14 reached at least Category 1 (sustained wind of 74-95 mph) status...with 7 major storms (at least a Category 3 status with sustained winds of 111-130 mph).

Severe Weather in Arkansas 2006

Air mass thunderstorm - Generally, a thunderstorm not associated with a front or similar type of weather feature. Air mass thunderstorms typically are associated with warm, tropical air in the summer months; they develop during the afternoon in response to heating, and dissipate rather quickly after sunset. They generally are less likely to be severe than other types of thunderstorms.

Anvil - The flat, spreading top of a thunderstorm.

Approaching severe - A thunderstorm which contains winds of 40 to 57 mph or hail around 1/2 inch in diameter.

Bow echo - On radar, a line of thunderstorms that bulges outward into a bow shape. Damaging thunderstorm winds often occur near the center of a bow echo.

Box - A severe thunderstorm watch or tornado watch. The term derives from the fact that a watch takes the shape of a rectangle or parallelogram when plotted on a map.

Cap - A layer of warm air, several thousand feet above the surface, which suppresses or delays the development of thunderstorms. If the air is unstable enough, explosive thunderstorm development can occur if the cap is removed or weakened (for example, when colder air moves in).

Cold air funnel - A funnel cloud or (rarely) a small, relatively weak tornado that can develop from a shower or thunderstorm when the air aloft is unusually cold (hence the reference to "cold air").

Convection - In meteorology, this term is used most often to describe the vertical transport of heat and moisture, especially by updrafts and downdrafts in unstable air. Showers and thunderstorms are forms of convection.

Cumulonimbus cloud - A cloud characterized by strong vertical development in the form of mountains or huge towers, topped at least partially by a smooth, flat anvil. This type of cloud is more commonly known as a thunderstorm or thunderhead.

Cumulus - Detached clouds, generally dense and with sharp outlines, showing vertical development in the form of domes, mounds, or towers. Tops normally are rounded while bases are more horizontal. Cumulus clouds may grow into towering cumulus or cumulonimbus clouds.